ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS:

COMMUNITY RESEARCH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF WOMEN IN NORTHERN COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY THE ALASKA HIGHWAY GAS PIPELINE

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CONTENTS

Preface ii

Introduction 1

Women Development and Change, A Methodological Framework 4

Applied Community Research - Examples from Fort Nelson, B.C. and Whitehorse, Y.T. 11

Impact of Energy Development on Women and Their Families 15

Implications of the Inclusion of the Human Side of Energy in Development Planning 30

PREFACE

This material was presented by the Women's Research Centre to the 2nd International Symposium on the Human Side of Energy Development in the session entitled "Energy Development and Social Institutions" in August 1981 at the University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Jan Barnsley introduces the Women's Research Centre perspective, noting that when development planners assess socio-economic impacts, they seldom take the concerns of women, and of the community, into account. Such concerns are usually dismissed as exogenous.

Dr. Helga Jacobson analyses that practice of exclusion and provides considerations for a methodology which would result in more realistic impact assessments.

Debra Dungey of Whitehorse, Y.T. and Eleanor Summer of Fort Nelson, B.C. give examples of the application of such a methodology, drawing upon their own experiences as community researchers for the Women's Research Centre study, Beyond the Pipeline.

Diana Ellis describes some of the impacts of development upon women and their families, as assessed by the women involved.

This Women's Research Centre presentation concludes with a look at the implications for governments, business, unions and the community of including the human side of energy in planning for development.

INTRODUCTION

(presentation by Jan Barnsley, Co-ordinator, Women's Research Centre)

In this presentation we are speaking from the Women's Research Centre's experience over the past five years in working on the issue of women and economic development, particularly in northern B.C. and the Yukon. We are speaking from our experience in doing research - on a variety of issues - that makes women's lives and situations central to the research process.

As an example, we will use one specific study we completed in December of 1979: a community study of the socio-economic impact of the Alaska Highway gas pipeline on women and their families in Fort Nelson, B.C., and Whitehorse in the Yukon.

In addressing the topic of "Energy Development and Social Institutions," we will focus on the family as a social institution and as an economic unit. We will show how beginning with this focus makes clear the impact of energy development on a wide range of institutions and, in particular, on women and their families.

In order to provide a framework for what we'll present, it is necessary to review, very briefly, the history of energy development in Canada (particularly in western Canada) as exemplified by the Alaska Highway gas pipeline project.

Energy is an international and household catchword. Billions of corporate and political dollars are invested in the search for and control of energy and, in fact, the development of northern communities in Canada has been based on the extraction of natural resources.

The "Northern Vision" attitude from the 1950s assumes that any such development is good - even boom-and-bust development with its consequences of degradation of the land and disruption of social communities. Most often, employment opportunities - the jobs created by development projects - are used as a justification for energy development, and as a reason to put up with the more negative consequences. As we'll see, however, jobs for local people who live in the north is largely a myth. Rarely do they win jobs over the international teams of resource extraction workers.

Development of northern Canada's oil and gas has included enactment of federal policies to ensure Canadian sovereignty in the high arctic; formation of a government-owned resource company - Petrocan; construction of instant, isolated resource-based settlements; and, despite regulatory delays, the intricate agreement between local, provincial, federal and

international governments and industry to construct the Alaska Highway natural gas pipeline.

The history of the Alaska Highway gas pipeline project is a long one. Discussion and debate about the feasibility of transporting Alaskan gas and oil to U.S. markets (south of the 49th parallel) through Canada began in 1968, after huge oil and gas discoveries were made in Prudhoe Bay on Alaska's north slope.

Since that time many proposals have been advanced to address the problem of transporting the oil and gas from the northern edge of the continent to U.S. markets.

Studies have been completed and inquiries commissioned to examine the nature and consequences of proposals put forward by the companies who want to construct the transportation systems.

For example, there was the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, set up in 1974 and chaired by Mr. Justice Thomas Berger, to consider the impacts of an energy corridor in the Mackenzie Valley and Western Arctic. In April 1977, the Alaska Highway Pipeline Inquiry, chaired by Dean Lysyk, was established to consider the implications of construction of a pipeline through the Yukon Territory. The report of the Lysyk Inquiry and the National Energy Board's recommendation of an overland route through the Yukon, B.C. and Alberta, led to a Canadian and U.S. agreement on "principles applicable to a northern gas agreement" in September 1977. The Canadian government introduced legislation into the House of Commons in February 1978 to approve the Alaska Highway gas pipeline and to establish the Northern Pipeline Agency to oversee the planning and construction of the Canadian portion of the pipeline. This legislation was given royal assent in April 1978.

The decision to tranport oil and gas resources to the United States through Canada has generated the largest private capital undertaking in Canada's history, and the effect of decisions made about transportation methods and locations will have an impact upon adjacent populations.

It has been estimated that 8,000 workers will be working on the pipeline during the peak construction period. (Northern Times, May 18, 1979)
As I said, the Alaska Highway gas pipeline is the largest capital project undertaken by private industry in Canada's history. The governments of Canada and the United States have had to create and pass legislation to enable this pipeline to be constructed. It is not surprising then, considering the scope of this project and the proximity of the pipeline to their communities, that all the women of Fort Nelson and Whitehorse who

were interviewed in our research in those communities already knew of the Alaska Highway gas pipeline and had considered what its impact on the communities would be. In fact, it was women from these towns who acted on their concerns and initiated and did the research we're using as an example here.

However, the concerns of the citizens in these communities are not taken into account by the decision-makers. In spite of the long history of energy development in Canada, Canada has still not developed a comprehensive policy or approach to energy development. And Canada's approach to impact assessment has generally been one of ad hoc responses. For example, accurate methods of impact assessment have not been developed. Although initial discussions about transporting Alaskan gas and oil south through Canada had been going on for more than 10 years, the Canadian government's impact assessment exercises on the effect of the Alaska Highway gas pipeline on northern Canadian communities began <u>after</u> the application to build the pipeline had been approved and <u>after</u> dates had been set to begin construction.

The concerns of those of us who are governed - who are outside the corporate and government worlds - are given short shrift. What is important to development planners as they assess socio-economic impact are <u>narrow</u> interpretations of factors of production such as labour (how many workers are needed?), transportation (how do we get the resource out?), and environment (where can we dump the tailings?). Community concerns and the concerns of women and families are seen as exogenous factors and are seldom taken into account.

To understand <u>why</u> it is necessary to take the concerns of women and families into account and to know <u>how</u> to do that efficiently and accurately, we require an analysis and understanding of women's work, particularly domestic work, and its contribution to the economy.

WOMEN, DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE, A METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

(presentation by Helga E. Jacobson, Ph.D., Methodology Consultant,
Women's Research Centre's Pipeline Research Committee.)

My concern in this paper is with presenting a framework for the inclusion of women in the development process. However, in order to proceed with defining the rules for this "inclusion" it is important to provide some of the reasons for making the point, in other words, for asking the question, "Why are women excluded?" I want also at the outset to note that this paper is based on the assumption that development is and will be taking place. It does not, however, assume that this is necessarily beneficial, nor even that it is necessary in the forms in which it now occurs. What is implied is that this is a situation in which for the majority of people there is little, if any, choice, and that in situations in which there is neither adequate consultation nor the possibility of arguing for or against projects or proposals, one must begin with an argument for inclusion in the process. Women, I will argue, constitute a special case of exclusion and therefore need special rules to ensure their participation.

There is a growing literature on the problems that concern women and the processes of development and change. By "development" I mean those processes and plans that organize and reorganize the environment in relation to the extraction and transportation of raw materials; the concomitant emergence of new and/or different living situations and new and/or different labour force participation for men and women; and all those features of change that precede or follow. In other words, the concern is in general with some of the consequences of an economy based on developing resources.

In the majority of cases where this development characterizes the economic structure and organization of the country, women are excluded from all stages of the process, from planning, to execution, to completion. This paper, then, aims at exploring some of the reasons for this exclusion, and at suggesting an approach which will fully include women in all the aspects of the processes involved.

I want to begin by explaining what I understand exclusion to mean in this context. Many recent studies that specifically address the concerns of women in relation to development note that accounts of women's work are rarely found. Women's working situations, and descriptions or analyses of the work itself, are poorly or minimally articulated into

general accounts of economic development. For example, Beneria* makes the following statement in an article written in 1980:

> Available estimates of the world's working population grossly underestimate women's participation in economic activities and cannot tell us much about what types of tasks women perform in terms of the existing gender-related division of labour. Yet we have reached a period in history in which the most basic tenets and assumptions influencing relationships between men and women in society have been called into question, and these included the existing division of labour.
>
> (Beneria, 1980, p.11)

Although the question has been raised many times and in many different parts of the world, the problem continues to exist. Women's interests and spheres of activity continue to be seen as at best marginal to and at worst irrelevant to economic development. Women may become visible if they work in the labour force, that is, outside the home. But even in this regard provision is rarely made for their participation, and again their interests are seen as secondary at best.

Exclusion can therefore be understood to mean the following:

1. A failure to see the sexual division of labour as significant to the process of economic development, with the result that "men's work" only is defined as relevant. Family, household and the domestic sphere are defined as marginal, and the work of the domestic domain and the character of the domestic economy remain invisible, unexplored, and unconsidered.

2. A failure to raise any questions that specifically concern women in the process of development, based on the lack of recognition that these issues are of crucial concern to women. Women are seen as being definitionally irrelevant to the process.

What is needed to remedy these omissions is first of all an analytical framework that recognizes women as crucially involved in society and all its organizational forms. We must have an analytical framework which does not simply restrict women to an understanding of their role in the family. Further, this framework for analysis must include a descriptive account of the domestic economy.

An account that fully includes women is, then, one to which the analysis of the sexual division of labour and the domestic economy is integral, not marginal, and one that seeks to explain the character of the relationship between the domestic domain and the wider society. (Other than in terms

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* Beneria, Lourdes, "Some questions about the origin of the division of labour by sex in rural societies," in Women in Rural Development: Critical Issues, International Labour Organization, pp.11-15, 1980.

of, for example, "women's role in the family." There is now a considerable literature which seeks to accomplish this, as well as a large number of critical works that further define the problem.[1])

Whatever form it takes, such an analysis must begin with the household and/or family, however defined - that is, with the basic unit of membership in the society. In our case it would be with family and household. It also begins with the definition of this unit as an economic unit, with the recognition that the work of the household is work. It is predominantly women who do the work of the domestic domain. So any analysis must also procede with their contribution in these terms. I want to be clear here that the concern is with the sexual division of labour; this kind of an analysis includes both men and women. It must therefore also address itself to the issues concerned with the differences between men's and women's work, and the different participation of each sex in household and workforce, and the consequences of these differences. In considering economic development in these terms, the household/domestic economy becomes an integral part of the overall analysis of development and change.

What this demands in addition is a different research strategy, a methodology that also includes women. And ultimately it demands a changed planning process. However, it is the former rather than the latter with which I am concerned here. (But see Rogers, The Domestication of Women[2], for an account of the problems and issues involved with planning in this context.) Such a methodology would include women directly in the focus of the investigation. Their concerns with economic development would be one of the issues, their participation in the process another. They would not be seen as passive recipients, but as members of the household, the community and the society, with active interests and concerns based on active participation. This would be the case whether they worked in the household only, or in household and labour force.

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1. See for example: Amsden, Alice H., The Economics of Women and Work, Penguin,1980; Burns, Scott, The Household Economy: Its Shape, Origins and Future, Beacon Press, 1975; Jacobson, Helga E., "Women, Society and Change: Perspectives on the Division of Labour," in Hainsworth,G.B., Southeast Asia: Women, Changing Social Structure and Cultural Continuity, University of Ottawa Press, pp.19-25, 1981; Lewenhak, Sheila, Women and Work, Fontana Books, 1981; Smith, Dorothy E., "A Peculiar Eclipsing: Women's Exclusion from Men's Culture," in Women's Studies International Quarterly, Vol.1, pp.281-295, 1978; Young, Kate M., "A methodological approach to analysing the effects of capitalist agriculture on women's role and their position withing the community." in Women in Rural Development: Critical Issues, International Labour Organization, pp.4-10,1980.

2. Rogers, Barbara, The Domestication of Women, Tavistock Publications, 1980.

It would, I think, be fair to argue that any research strategy or methodology can be modified in these terms to include women fully. What is needed is a starting point that recognizes women as active participants, as actors in their own right. What follows from these assumptions are direct questions to them about their lives, their work, their concerns. If these are actually marginal in the context, this will be reflected in the data. Women will not simply be marginal to the concerns of the investigation because they have already been defined as such before the research has begun. "Marginality," "dependency," become focusses of investigation rather than assumptions from which investigation proceeds.

Here, following from this general analysis, I want to continue with an account of the approach we have used in our own work at the Women's Research Centre, Vancouver, B.C. Our concern has been with "women and economic development" in the context of northern B.C. and the Yukon. Our approach is derived from the methods of participant observation developed in the discipline of social or cultural anthropology. We selected this approach initially for a number of reasons. First of all it allows for small-scale, intensive research to be carried out; second, it readily permits action as well as theory; third, it fits with our available resources and with the demands from the communities we work with. The methods of participant observation, from which our approach has been derived, lend themselves readily to adaptation to the situations in which we work.

The adaptations we make are based on the following characteristics of the approach. First, participant observation as a research strategy defines the researcher as part of the situation under study. Second, it allows for some level of participation in the study itself. Third, it necessitates the presentation of the informants' own views of their world or situation in the interpretations which follow. Fourth, it allows for the presentation of the perspective of the people doing the research in the presentation and interpretation. Fifth, it provides the basis for producing a description of the situation being investigated. Sixth, it involves direct interviewing of the participants in the situation being described - this may be through guided interviews, questionnaires or schedules, through observation, through participation, or any combination of these approaches. Seventh, it enables us to work with a presentation of the interests, experiences, daily life patterns, work situations and so on, of the actors themselves, and in relation to each other in the situation.

The information is specific to the people interviewed and represents them; it also includes their account of the community to which they belong.

The understanding of the social context can be broadened through interviewing people from different locations in the community being investigated. For example, the women themselves are the key informants; those they relate to or talk about are secondary sources of information - such as teachers, doctors, shopkeepers, administrators on the work site, or community leaders. In each case, however, the person interviewed provides his/her account of the situation. Additional sources are all the conventional sources of information about local communities, ranging from telephone directories to census data. The account of the situation of women and of the structure of the community is built up in this way.

One final point to make here is that our work is generalizable to the extent that the analysis presented characterizes our society and documents the characteristics of the rules for women's participation in family, household, and society.

In our work, then, this means that women are the central sources of information. It is their views of their situation that are the starting place of our process of questionning or of eliciting information. They present us or each other with their understanding of the world they live in. The account that is provided begins with an understanding of their location in their social context. Of central importance in this presentation is an account of their work in the family and household, and in the community, in support of their partners/husbands and children. The work in the domestic sphere and in the labour force of either or both partners is also central to this description.

The role and work of men in the family and in support of it are also crucial to the understanding and presentation that is made. However, it follows from the account given by women; it does not initiate the account of the domestic sphere or economy.

The account essentially begins with a presentation of the sexual division of labour, viewed from the perspective of women. It provides a description of the work of the family and household - that is, of women's work. Women are fully included because their work of organization and maintenance of the household is a central part of the description and analysis which follows. The presentation of women's work in this way allows for a link to be made between the work of the domestic economy and the work of the public domain. By defining women's work as work and by recognizing it as the performance of essential tasks, and, as such, as having economic implications and value, we define the relationship between domestic and public spheres of the economy and society.

Men and women are differentially located in our society. In social and economic conventions women stand in a dependency relationship, within the family and in relation to the maintenance of the household. Women's role in the family is to preserve it, and their work in the household is to orgnaize and maintain it by carrying out their appropriate tasks. Men, in principle, provide the financial support. When we speak of the domestic economy it is this relation we refer to. As increasing numbers of women move into the labour force, or themselves become sole supporters of their own households, this relation is altered. It is also altered by the increasing numbers of men who cannot support family and household on one wage.

Although the structure of domestic situations is changing, the values and assumptions that centre in the family, that define women's work as a "labour of love," that define wages on the basis of male "breadwinners" only, remain unchanged. For example, the differential between men's and women's wages and salaries remains and is in fact increasing. The understanding of the structure of the domestic economy and the analysis of the traditional sexual division of labour lays the basis for a better description of our society, and a better basis for making changes where they are needed.

An important additional point to stress here is the inclusion of the perspective of applied anthropology in this research approach. What this means in our work is twofold. First, it means that the interest and problems of our informants direct the interests of the research itself. It is generated not only out of their understanding and presentation but also out of their concern with local problems. Second, it means that frequently the participants in the situation carry out their own research. We, as researchers, aid in the planning, designing, structuring, coordination, and sometimes presentation of the research data. By crucial definition it is the women's own work and lives that we make visible in the presentation; the research rests in their definition of their situations.

The implication of this kind of research is practical as well as theoretical. In its organization it provides for links among the women involved and for an increased awareness of and learning about their own situations. It provides them with the basis for making a critique, for arguing for changes; it enables them to formulate more adequately the issues that concern them.

In the context of economic development, this approach has implications for theory and practice. It argues for the inclusion of women at all

stages of the process, from inception to completion. As an approach it also provides the basis for seeking information on the basis of which a critique of plans or policies can be made; and/or given the implementation of plan and policies, it then provides the basis for gathering information, documenting needs, and arguing both for inclusion and for change which will be in the interests of women as participants.

APPLIED COMMUNITY RESEARCH - EXAMPLES FROM FORT NELSON, B.C. AND WHITEHORSE, Y.T.

(presentations by Eleanor Summer, Fort Nelson community researcher, and Debra Dungey, Whitehorse community researcher, Women's Research Centre's Pipeline Research Committee.)

Fort Nelson is a community of about 6,000 located at Mile 300 of the Alaska Highway in Northern B.C. It depends on natural resources - gas and timber - for its livelihood. Fort Nelson is in the middle of an energy corridor and, as such, is familiar with boom-and-bust economy. The village as it now exists came into being in the 1940s when it served as an army base for the U.S. forces building the Alaska Highway.

There are many projects on the horizon which are expected to have an impact on our area. Some of these are the Alaska Highway gas pipeline, the Tumbler Ridge coal development, Site C development in Fort St. John and the Liard Dam development. At least two of these (the pipeline construction and the Tumbler Ridge development) are expected to coincide, with attendant labour shortages and heightened social problems.

Fort Nelson is expected to be the major staging area for the building of the Alaska Highway gas pipeline in northern B.C. It is anticipated that a major portion of the pipe for this massive project will be shipped by rail to Fort Nelson and trucked from there to the pipeline sites.

As early as 1977, some local women became concerned at the seeming lack of action being taken by any level of government with regard to alleviating the possible detrimental effects of this short-term massive development on Fort Nelson residents. Many had lived through previous pipelines, so only the size of this new one was different. These women - only a handful - started working with the Women's Research Centre in Vancouver and Yukon Status of Women Council in Whitehorse. There were two sides of this working relationship - one of lobbying, and one of information sharing. As with many isolated areas, Fort Nelson residents always seem to be the last to know what is going on.

Beyond the Pipeline* was the result of the lobbying done by this group of women. As you learned earlier, this was a research approach hand-tailored to meet the needs of the communities involved. As one of the three women hired for the local research team, I talked with many women regarding their concerns for their own and their families' well-being if this development

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*Ellis, Diana, et al., Beyond the Pipeline, Women's Research Centre, Vancouver, B.C., 1979

were to proceed. The women we talked to were of varied age groups, incomes, marital status and race. As Fort Nelson is a young town with young families, this group made up the bulk of those interviewed.

As a researcher, my main observation of this project was that women knew what was happening and women wanted to see their families protected from adverse social impacts of pipeline development. A typical comment heard from women was that "We've lived through pipelines before and gotten nothing from it. This time is going to be different."

The women, on the whole, seemed to feel that if this pipeline was an economically viable project, it would be built, despite people's concerns. They saw themselves as those who must cope with whatever the governments and big business did to their town, their world, when major development took place.

As one of the researchers, I feel that ours is an excellent model for dealing with communities faced with massive changes because of energy developments. We had two sets of experts at work here - an "outside" research group and local women who knew their communities. We had good, solid methods arranged for the gathering of information, and the trust of those interviewed that they were dealing with people they knew and could relate to. There was no local/outside barrier to cross.
Often companies and governments do studies which just sit on shelves in offices and libraries. Beyond the Pipeline has been used in the formulation of the Fort Nelson Village Plan and the Peace River Liard Regional District Area Settlement Plan. The researchers on the project have been approached by residents when information was needed. And conferences like this come up, which feature our research methods as part of their presentations.

The same women who made Beyond the Pipeline a reality have been responsible in part for the establishment of the Alaska Highway Gas Pipeline Advisory Council for north B.C. and the upcoming establishment of an Information Impact Centre in Fort Nelson.

Beyond the Pipeline is a statement of women's concerns for themselves, their partners, their families, and for the small world in which they live and work. The fact that such research has been done and has led to such positive changes, gives me hope that people will, after all, be considered as part of the whole development picture in the future.

Whitehorse has a population of over 15,000, making it the largest centre in the Yukon Territory, which has a total population of 21,000. The major industries in the Yukon are tourism and mining. Over time the Yukon has experienced major development and impact from the goldrush, from construction of the Alaska Highway and most recently from intense exploration, mining and development-related activities and projects, such as the proposed Alaska Highway gas pipeline. It is this last development which I am most familiar with.

As Eleanor Summer stated, the work around women and the pipeline began before the report Beyond the Pipeline. In fact, Yukon women had begun to voice their concerns several years earlier. The report solidifies what had been said. The Yukon Status of Women Council made a presentation to the Lysyk Inquiry in 1977, and met with and have ongoing correspondence with the Senate Committee on the Northern Pipeline. Again, in 1979, they made a presentation to the E.A.R.P. (Environmental Assessment and Review Panel) hearings. Women of the north have long been involved in, and have demonstrated their concerns about, their community.

It is this kind of work within the community in which I have been and continue to be involved.

As a Whitehorse resident I was one of the community researchers for Beyond the Pipeline. Research was conducted within the community by members of that community. The nature and approach of this research methodology is a real contrast to the methodology used in the majority of reports done on Whitehorse for companies by outside consultants.

Having the expertise on our community more easily accessed the researchers to people and information. It was from this experience that we began. In Phase I we spoke at length to women in the community. The intensity of these interviews only magnified and illustrated the needs and concerns which the report validates. In Phase II we spoke to people in government, to agencies and to organizations, in order to examine the delivery of services.

There were varying levels of cooperation. At times we were not taken seriously by government spokespersons, and because of this at times they gave us information they might not have given to others.

Responses were sometimes glib and off-handed. Some difficulties arose because of this.

There were some difficulties with being a community member and doing work in our own community. We could not be removed from our work.

We were often hounded by local press and thus easily became public. We had responsibilities of confidentiality to those interviewed until the report was officially released by the Northern Pipeline Agency.

Since the release of the report in December 1979 there have been some positive moves in the community of Whitehorse that are related to issues we raised in the report. A second mental health nurse now has permanent job status; a food prices inquiry is being conducted early in the fall; community members have been appointed to the Whitehorse Pipeline Impact Information Centre Board. Now I'm a member of that board myself. Although some time has passed since the release of Beyond the Pipeline we continue to get inquiries. I'm pleased to say I'm also a member of the Pipeline Committee of the Yukon Status of Women Council, with special funding from Secretary of State.

The Pipeline Committee continues to be active, working with other local commuity groups monitoring any changes in the community.

IMPACT OF ENERGY DEVELOPMENT ON WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES

(presentation by Diana Ellis, Co-ordinator, Women's Research Centre's Pipeline Research Project.)

I want to describe what the women of Fort Nelson and Whitehorse told us about their lives and work in their communities as Beyond the Pipeline took shape. I'm going to begin with a few demographics, then let the women take you, in their own words as much as possible, through their lives. I will conclude by laying the issue of the Alaska Highway gas pipeline over the map of work and activity that I will have drawn, so we can move on and look at the implications of this energy development on several social institutions.

We interviewed 116 women in this research project: 57 in Fort Nelson, 59 in Whitehorse. The women ranged in age from 16 years old to over 65, with about 51 per cent between the ages of 25 and 34. Their length of residence in their community ranged from a few months to all of their life with approximately 57 per cent of our informants living five years or less in the town, 26 per cent, from five to 15 years and 17 per cent, 15 years and up. Seventy per cent of the women were married, 59 per cent had children; 65 per cent of the married women worked outside the home for wages, 46 per cent of those married women working outside the home had children to care for as well. Twenty-eight per cent of our informants were single, approximately 11 per cent lived alone, 13 per cent shared accommodation or still lived at home, four per cent were single parents.

In describing the lives and work of women in these two communities, and indeed, everywhere, it's hard to know where to begin. Do we start with work? If so, where is that placed... housework?, the work of maintaining the family?, volunteer work in the community?, or work in the paid labour force outside the home?

How do we isolate specific issues, when their interconnections are vital to our understanding? Access to transportation, for example, will affect a woman's choice of employment and housing; it will influence the activities she or her children will involve themselves in - even her state of mental health (and subsequent use of health and social services) may be affected by the kind and amount of transportation she has available to her.

A simple survey notation of the kind of work a woman's partner might do tells us little about the profound effect of this work on her and the

family's life and work. Consider the four-month absence of her partner on a drilling rig in the bush during winter freeze-up, or three months of construction engineering on a Yukon highway in the summer, daily shift work in the mill or mine, or the bi-yearly transfer with government and industry. What is the effect of this work upon the woman, and upon the family?

There are two obvious points I will start with. First, when you look at a community, women are everywhere. They staff the town and key portions of industry, they staff the neighbourhoods and homes. One simply cannot isolate women's concerns, therefore, to jobs and rape. The fact that women are everywhere should not surprise us of course; we all see women everyday (some of us actually are women). But the work women do, the thoughts they have about that work, are not as easily seen by the world at large, and that's my second point. Women are on the one hand everywhere, and on the other hand women are invisible. So a lot of assumptions have been made about who women are, what they do, and where they do it. By and large those assumptions have been made by others.

In our study, the women in the northern communities of Fort Nelson and Whitehorse say they appreciate the physical beauty of the north, its recreational opportunities, and, most of all, the economic advantages it offers their husbands and families. Many feel these communities offer more opportunities for business and community involvement, and a better atmosphere for raising children, than do the larger cities of the south.

Yet these women are not blind to the problems posed by living in the north, including geographical isolation, isolation from other family and friends, and the stress of a harsh climate. Many have taken the initiative in overcoming these problems - by setting up transition homes for battered women, women's centres, public transit systems, and community groups, and by becoming involved in all levels of local government.

Women told us they wanted to live in stable communities where work could be found first of all for their partner, if they were married. A close second need expressed was for adequate paid work outside of the home for themselves. They wanted reasonable educational facilities for their children, the certainty of health care when disease or illness struck, and the opportunity to put down roots and feel a part of the community for however long they were going to be there. For some that would be forever, or for 10 or 20 years. For others, it would be for three years or less. Often it depends on employment possibilities. Women with families hope to have available to them

some of the tools they need to carry out the work of maintaining the home, for caring for their husbands, their children, and themselves.

In evaluating the wide range of issues raised by women in Fort Nelson and Whitehorse, housing emerges as one of the most central. For women, the home is not only a shelter or refuge; it is also a work environment. Much of a woman's work takes place in the home - either by choice or necessity - whether she is married or single, employed outside the home, or not. Women bear a major responsibility for house maintenance, care of children, preparation of meals and overall management of the household.

So housing, and the design of the community profoundly affect women's lives. In the north, the importance of the home is heightened by the extreme winter weather which keeps people indoors for long portions of the year, and by the fact that the isolation encourages the use of the home as a place of entertainment, both for children and adults. Hence the concerns women express about housing arise from their actual work experience.

The construction of housing was talked about a lot. Many women said new homes were being built by southern contractors to standards unsuitable for the northern environment and people's real needs. Here are some of their direct quotes:

> The houses are huge, elaborate and extravagant...the construction people build for a certain class up here; it's certainly not the average income class. We'd like to live in a small house without a lot of extras but there are not houses like that available.
>
> The emphasis should be on family housing. If a man can get a job here and a house here he can bring his family and put down roots.

Often houses were poorly constructed:

> You may as well have a tarpaper shack as these new things; it would be just as warm, [and] building inspection is insufficient.
>
> Some buildings built by out-of-towners are falling apart in their first year.
>
> As for the wooden basements people are using, they won't stand up - literally - in a couple of years they are cracked and leaking.
>
> Houses are not designed for the area, they need better roofs and heavier insulation.

Women suggested the the national building code should have some specific northern standards in order to deal more effectively with the climate and soil conditions.

The work of raising a family requires space in the home, and again the weather considerations should play a part in home design. Here's what some women said:

> We need basements here for two main reasons. Being in the north you often need to buy in large quantities so storage space is needed. And with 10-month-long winters, play space is needed for the kids.
>
> Homes should be built with indoor and outdoor play areas for kids...this would help ease the burden on families.
>
> It's important that the house be situated so you make sure you get sun for those extra months of light on the house...that makes a real difference up here.

The location of housing is important too - and touches on employment, and the town planning needs of women.

> I rented a place to be close to work, shopping and library - to be central.
>
> I'd like to see more recreation facilities in the East Subdivision because that is where the people live.
>
> Riverdale is a choice location because it is so close to schools and stores and the bus goes by the door.

Due to the spread-out design of the communities of Whitehorse and Fort Nelson, women told us there were problems in getting access to some of the available services. Fort Nelson has no public transportation. Whitehorse has a wonderful mini-bus system, but the services need to be expanded as the town covers 162 square miles and some of the housing areas are miles from the downtown core. Many women do not have access to a vehicle, and they spoke of the difficulty in getting around the town, particularly in winter. Shopping facilities located away from residential areas were impossible to get to without a vehicle, and were especially problematic with small children in tow.

The availability of housing, either to purchase or rent, is a vulnerable spot as well, and open to market speculation and fluctuation. In 1978, the year of all the pipeline boom-talk, Whitehorse housing prices increased by

26 per cent. The women said:

> It's too bloody expensive; I don't know how people do it. The mortgages have to be $600 - $800 a month and then there's utilities and food. There are a lot of people up here with good salaries who say they have a hard time of it.
>
> There's an incredible money pressure up here. It's hard on the nuclear family; the woman has to work but there are no special facilities or services for children.
>
> A recent survey expects 600 people with permanent jobs not related to the pipeline to move in in the next while. Where are they going to live - let alone the pipeline people?
>
> Lack of housing is hampering business expansion. I can't get a business partner due to the lack of housing in Fort Nelson.

So that's one picture that emerges - the picture of women and the workplace of the home. And this work in the home touches the areas of town planning, transportation, home design building construction standards, cost of living and so on. We're not only talking about micro-waves versus blenders when we talk about work in the home.

By far the most common reason which married women identified for moving to the north, or moving around <u>in</u> the north, was their husbands' work. The kind of work a man does shapes the life of the family. Women described the adjustments they made to maintain family stability, and I want to talk about that - again, as part of women's work.

These adjustments were made mainly because of economic necessity; women are often dependent on their partner's income, even when they have their own paid jobs. And the type of work available to their partners is often that which takes them away from home for long or frequent periods of time.

Women deal with this in various ways. Some move themselves and their families along with their husbands. A woman interviewed in Fort Nelson spends eight months in Fort St. John and four months in Fort Nelson each year. Her husband works out of Fort Nelson in the winter doing oil patch work and as they prefer to be together and keep some semblance of family living, she and her son drive up from Fort St. John and set up a home in Fort Nelson for four months each winter. She said that people from Fort Nelson are starting to warm up to her when she says she's there for her fourth winter. She's made one good friend but finds people don't want to make friends if she's there for only a short time. She is making efforts to make more friends and has

"how-not-to-be-depressed down to a science" by taking what she calls "cheer-up" courses at night school. In order that their family can be together, in order for her husband to have some domestic comforts so he can carry out his work, this woman has become a modern nomad, packing up household goods and moving after her husband's work.

So the impact of his work on her life also impacts on the availability of short-term housing in the community, on the kinds of educational and recreational facilities there are for her and her son, and on the availability of social services and the ease of social networks. Through his work, there is a direct impact of energy development upon her and her family.

A whitehorse woman deals with a similar situation in a different manner. Her husband works in road construction and is often out of town during the spring, summer, and fall. She said:

> We usually join him during the summer months, and he's home during the winter and [we] manage without him on the border months when the children are in school. It definitely affects our lives, but we've lived this way for 15 years and he is happy when he's working on the road.

This woman works part-time while her husband is away and her children are in school so that "time won't chafe." Her employment opportunities are also impacted by her husband's work. She wants work outside the home, but her own availability for work depends on his work schedule and the family needs that have to be met - especially when she is the single parent for several months of the year.

A Fort Nelson woman said:

> If a woman is going to come to Fort Nelson with her man she had better be self-reliant, independent and have a good relationship with her husband. Otherwise the marriage is going to fall to the stresses connected with her foreign-ness to the community, his long hours and the amount of time she has on her hands.

Women know the family's economic survival usually depends on their partners' wages, even when they have their own jobs. But they are also aware of the direct link between the large numbers of marriage and family breakdowns that occur in their communities, and the kind of living pattern that many families endure. They see this breakdown being aggravaged by frequent or long absences of the male partner, and by the woman's subsequent depression, isolation, loneliness and concern about the needs of their children.

Men's work is shaped by the needs of the employer. Although men may need or like that work, it is clear that the employer makes little accommodation for the workers' family needs. We speculate, therefore, that living and working in a northern community such as Fort Nelson or Whitehorse can put a couple's relationship, and their family, "at risk" - despite the high value many of these residents place upon family life. Women say the design of support services should take into account the special needs created by climatic extremes, isolation and economic pressures on the family that are prevalent in their towns.

And when women talk about support services there is no one program, or building, or service, that we can handily put a finger on and say, "This would make things better." It's certainly not a matter of having one mental health worker covering the northern half of the province. Recreation, access to programs, childcare availability for adults participating in adult recreation programs, preventive mental health services, women's drop-in centres, family places, lay counselling programs, professional counselling programs, adult education courses (again with adequate childcare facilities and programming geared to meet the other work needs of women), community centres as well as recreation facilities - all these are part of the necessary network. Here are some more representative comments from women:

> Women at home with small kids need a central place to meet people.
>
> I'd take courses but I'd have to get a babysitter and that's costly.
>
> A travelling psychiatrist doesn't do anyone any good because of the kinds of problems [people have] here - alcohol, depressed people, marital problems - these kinds of things that can't be solved in a day.
>
> About 80 per cent of those with problems just need an uninvolved person to talk to.
>
> It would have been good to have been able to really talk to someone during the winter when things got a bit foggy.
>
> There is a need for improved indoor recreation facilities because of the long cold winters.
>
> I used to be able to exercise regularly at the centre but now with a baby there's nowhere I can go.

I'd like to say something here about people's ability to get out and do things. Sometimes it has been said to me, "Well, if only these women would get out of the house and meet someone, or phone around, or walk downtown, or just do something then they wouldn't get depressed." Or I'm told: "I used to live in a small town and I did more there than anywhere; it's up to everyone to take care of themselves - they'd probably have problems no matter where they were."

It's been my experience that women are already the most active participants in small communities, and in areas of development especially. They have moved mountains of bureaucracy to open childcare centres, operate pre-schools, get public transit systems underway, operate libraries, run counselling centres, open transition homes for battered women, organize fall fairs, etc. Of course they already do these things - it's part of women's work in the home and the community. What they are now suggesting is that this work be seen as real work, be recognized as part of what keeps the community going, and that some of the supports needed to start and keep this kind of work going be considered as part of the infrastructure of the community. When a community or recreation centre is built, for example, make sure it has a series of ordinary meeting rooms in it, as it's not always possible or feasible to meet in someone's home. Hockey and curling are not the only sports in the world. Women tell us a bowling alley is one ideal recreation focus for women, especially when they're with their children. When a shopping mall is built, it should have some store-front spaces for community groups, or drop-in centres, or childcare space. We must recognize the value of the commercial and social interactions that go on in the marketplace.

So as women work in the home to provide the service and support that enables the family to function as a family, we see how this work extends into all parts of the community and its infrastructure. What goes on in the family, when multiplied a hundred or a thousandfold, provides the fabric of the community. Family needs are part of community needs and must be considered as planners initiate socio-economic impact assessments and development strategies. In other words, we should be seeing the value of the community and social interaction work of women and planning to enhance it. One wouldn't think of opening a subdivision without clearing lots, constructing roads and making plans for sewer and water lines. The same perspective should be brought to bear in community and social service planning.

I'd like to move on to look at the work women do outside the home for pay. Fort Nelson and Whitehorse women told us they work outside the

home in order to support themselves and their families, to preserve their mental well-being, or to involve themselves in a career.

The need to work outside the home is reflected in the percentage of women active in the paid labour force in the Yukon and northeast B.C. In the Yukon 58.7 per cent of women are active in the paid labour force; in northeast B.C., 46 per cent are. In Canada generally, women constitute 38.9 per cent of the national labour force and 47.8 per cent of all women in Canada are working, or looking for work.

About 62 per cent of women who work in Canada work in clerical or service sector employment. In the north, despite rumours of many women working in non-traditional jobs in the mines or oil rigs, the story is no different:

> Women don't have trouble finding jobs if they're willing to do typical jobs like [being] waitresses or bar maids.
>
> I had difficulty finding a job that satisfied me when I first came to Whitehorse; there are always jobs available, not appropriate [ones], but they're there if you want them.

The barriers women face in obtaining employment include lack of childcare, few training opportunities and the double responsibility of home and workplace.

Access to better paid non-traditional work is limited by lack of appropriate training and training opportunities. The training that is available is usually inaccessible to women because of lack of childcare, and because the program design does not meet women's needs. A single parent woman, who was already working, and who wished to upgrade her training so as to receive more pay to meet her family's needs, said: "It's unfortunate that most of the courses at the vocational school are during the day. I would have to quit my job to go there." Places in the non-traditional training courses are bought by the local government and the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission - the idea being to make people employable. But the women who want training in non-traditional work but who already have jobs - secretaries, waitresses, etc. - are not a priority in the sponsored courses. They are told they already possess marketable skills. And if they are sponsored, they receive only $10 a week childcare expense money. It's no wonder then that despite the fact that 40 per cent of the inquiries about non-traditional training at the Whitehorse vocational school came from women, only one per cent of the students training in non-traditional work areas were women.

Lack of transportation, or inadequate transportation, creates problems for women employed, or seeking employment. Women with children have difficulty finding a childcare centre close to home or work, and without a vehicle this problem becomes almost insurmountable.

The lack of adequate childcare presents a major barrier to women's work outside the home. If mothers cannot find childcare they are unable to work. Some, in desperation, settle for less-than-adequate care. If women are able to find well-paid non-traditional work involving shifts, they are unable to locate 24-hour childcare to meet that work need. As a result, many women with children work only part-time, or on a temporary basis, in order to cope with childcare realities.

> One of the reasons I haven't worked for the past year is the poor childcare facilities...I quit both my previous jobs because there wasn't adequate care for my child.
>
> I called all the daycare centres listed in the phone book as I want to return to work after my baby is born...none will take infants.

It is difficult to get adequate funding for professionally run daycare centres in B.C. and the Yukon, and many women have to use in-home services provided by other women which may not be up to standard - if there are standards. One women said: "I used to leave my kids with a sitter who had eight or ten children in her apartment." Another said: "I work an afternoon shift as a nurse so my husband can take care of our child. But he didn't like having to make supper and wished I would work any other shift...but we needed the money. It was just too hard to make ends meet on one salary and put a bit away for a home."

These barriers to employment do not always prevent women in Fort Nelson and Whitehorse from seeking and finding employment outside the home. In these communities, women's participation in the labour force is even more essential, due to the high cost of living and the stresses created by the climate and the isolation. However, women do find themselves available for the more traditional, low-paying service or part-time jobs. Single parent women responsible for the sole support of their family, or women whose partners are modestly paid, find it difficult to survive financially in Fort Nelson or Whitehorse:

> I work because I have to. We need the money to live. There's no way you can live up here with a family on one paycheque unless they're making an awfully good salary.

> I have to work to help feed the family. In most families in Whitehorse, both parents work.
>
> I wouldn't work if I didn't have to, as I feel that a homemaker is the highest profession any woman can have.
>
> I don't think it's good for both people to have to work; but there's no way you can do it without two incomes.

Married women and single mothers in the labour force find themselves coping with two jobs - they work outside the home and they maintain the home and family. They work to ensure the economic survival of the family, especially given the high cost of living in northern communities. But they often end up taking poorly-paid temporary or part-time work in order to meet other family obligations.

The barriers to women's employment makes their home management work more difficult. For some, the eventual decision is actually to remove themselves from the labour market, thus lowering the family income and decreasing their own opportunities in the work world. Other women who cannot afford not to work for wages find themselves in the remarkable double bind of being inadequately paid for work that requires their absence from home and family.

I'd like to talk about one more item before moving on to pipeline impact on women. I want to talk about shopping - shopping for food and for the goods and services needed to operate the household.

Shopping is an activity which is crucial to the maintenance of home and family. The tasks of providing for the household are so much taken for granted that they are seldom seen or discussed as work. And shopping is an activity which is most frequently associated with consumption, rather that being seen as a maintenance enterprise. It is also the activity which connects household and society; it can, therefore, be used to define and make visible the nature of this relationship.

Shopping is an essential task - as one woman put it, "You can't boycott food, you either buy or you starve." This comment summarizes a recurrent view and defines a recurrent problem - that of high prices. Comments on high food prices ranged from condemnation to acceptance.

> I've done the gamut and I don't think it's that bad... prices aren't that much higher here than down in the south. There is a rip-off in the retail market, however, when we see prices go up and down like a yo-yo from the beginning of the week to the end. It's

> not the freight or inflation that is the problem. It's the retail mark up.
>
> Our grocery bill has nearly doubled in the past two years; I guess that's one of the reasons I started working.
>
> Prices are exorbitant; we are caught in monopoly prices for food and this won't stop until people get involved and say it.
>
> It's upsetting that groceries can't be fresh; we've bought mouldy cheese, stale cookies and bread dated two weeks earlier...there is no excuse when they charge the prices they do.
>
> I'm being asked to pay a price for living in an isolated area.

Women relate differently to this problem. Some say, "You get used to it," some cope by talking about how they try to manage better - like having a greenhouse or an extensive garden, like going hunting and fishing, or preserving foods and baking their own bread. Women also shop around, buy on specials, order frozen meat orders from Vancouver, buy from food co-ops or go without certain items.

The importance of this issue in our investigations is that it reflects directly upon the quality and management of life in the community. As costs increase and facilities do not improve, problems increase and become more visible. The management enterprise of the home becomes more difficult.

I will conclude by looking at where the construction of the Alaska Highway gas pipeline fits into our picture. We know that development impacts on the community. Social impact assessments, to varying degrees, tell us that. Past history tells us that. And now that we have brought into focus the life and work of women who live in the community, the question arises: Where do we find the interface between women and pipeline, women and energy development, the private world of home/neighbourhood/family and public work of commerce, business, politics and development? We find it everywhere.

First of all, every woman we talked with knew about the pipeline and had thought about its effect on her life and family. Some women were positive because they hoped for some benefit to themselves or the community - usually in terms of jobs and therefore money. "The pipeline will be good for working people; they will hire anybody," was one perspective.

Some of the responses were negative: "We don't need more people."

Some were fatalistic: "If it has to be built it will be built regardless; if you want progress you have to give in to something."

Many were tentative, hoping for benefits, wary of possible changes, not sure:

> The town will have more money, but most of it will be made by outsiders and taken out of Fort Nelson.
>
> I hope what happened in Alaska doesn't happen here, and if it does we're moving.

Nearly everyone was talking about the pipeline, or feeling some impact from it. It is clear that several booms-and-busts can be expected before actual construction on any of this mega-project begins.

In terms of employment for women, the expectation of women in Fort Nelson and Whitehorse is that pipeline spin-off work will create opportunities for women in the traditional clerical and service fields. Many women believe few women will apply for actual pipeline work because they know that few women have the skills necessary to work on the pipeline, and that there are no opportunities to acquire those skills in their own communities. Nor do the women foresee any such training being available in the future. Even though women were cited as a special target group for employment possibilities, they do not see any commitment on the part of either the Northern Pipeline Agency, or the pipeline construction companies, to produce training programs which would effectively meet the special training needs of women. In addition, if the current problems with standards and availability of childcare increase with a larger population, women will face an added barrier to pipeline training and employment.

Family and community stability issues came up again in terms of pipeline work for the community. Women want qualified local workers to have the first opportunity at direct pipeline work. Women in Fort Nelson also want a residency requirement similar to that in the Yukon territory whereby an influx of workers from "outside" is avoided. They state very strongly that local people and the local economy should benefit from money being made on the Alaska Highway gas pipeline.

To date, however, there is no commitment to ensure the local hire of qualified northeastern B.C. residents; the situation regarding union or non-union hire has not been clarified; there are not training programs in place for women, Indian peoples, or others. We can project that there will

be minimal employment of local residents including women and Indians, on the pipeline. We can conclude that the concept of local hire is a myth conveniently created by government and industry to sell development and dupe local residents.

While women hope the pipeline will bring more businessess, better shopping and improved services to Whitehorse and Fort Nelson, they also want local business people to have the opportunity to expand, rather than having outsiders come in and set up business only for the duration of the project. However, the evidence from our interviews with local industry is that businesses may not expand because of the bust they fear will follow the boom. It may well be that the population will increase with the pipeline, but that the delivery of goods and services will not.

Women worry about whether the pipeline construction will increase the cost of living in Fort Nelson and Whitehorse because of increased marketplace speculation and an inflationary wage spiral. Some say they will have to move away if the cost of living goes beyond what they and their families can afford. Others are considering the possibility of adding another wage earner to the family, or of seeking out pipeline work in order to survive economically and stay in the community. These are major family lifestyle decisions.

Women predict an increase in crime because of the pipeline construction. Many are concerned that there will be more incidents of rape and vandalism. There is concern that organized crime and drug use will increase. Women worry about their safety and the safety of their daughters and other women when the workers leave the work camps and come to town for days and nights off. They also worry about the effect on their children of what they already experience as a speedy boom town environment. Some families are making plans to move away for the duration of pipeline construction, others are watching the situation closely. Most, of course, have little choice but to stay.

Many women expect the construction of the Alaska Highway gas pipeline will aggravate the housing situation. Even before northern construction has begun, the pipeline is having an effect. House prices sky-rocketed, then bottomed out in Whitehorse over a period of 18 months. Fort Nelson women report that more workers are coming to town to seek work on the pipeline. This is the beginning of an extra demand for housing in a town that is already experiencing a housing crisis. Both communities are concerned about the proximity of work camps to their communities, and the location and servicing of housing facilities for those workers and their families not accommodated in work camps.

The combination of big money and big development will put a strain on people and a strain on local services. This strain will manifest itself in two ways. Present services, such as schools and hospitals, will be hard-pressed to handle the expected population increase construction will bring. And there will be an increased need for support services such as marriage counselling, mental health services, transition houses and crisis lines. This need will occur because of the added strain on individuals and families caused by financial difficulties and the change in community values that accompanies large developments in small communities.

Throughout the course of this work, Fort Nelson and Whitehorse women stated they care very much for their towns. They worry that the pipeline's impact on the quality of life will be negative - leading to a possible loss of respect for the town. "The community spirit has existed here," said one Whitehorse women, "and still does, but it is lessening with industrial development." "Will the way of life change drastically when money means more and more?" "It could change the community economically and socially for the good if people don't get too greedy...."

In conclusion, women's work in the home and with their families is part of economic development. Women help keep it all running: from producing the next generation of workers, to caring for this generation, to connecting the networks of family and business-place through their activities. Women in Fort Nelson and Whitehorse told us: they are not anti-pipeline, they are anti boom-bust development; they want local input into pipeline impact planning; they need services provided and improved for local residents first of all. They stressed that their work in the home, in the community and in the labour force should be seen as part of economic development.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE INCLUSION OF THE HUMAN SIDE OF ENERGY IN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

(presentation by Jan Barnsley, Co-ordinator, Women's Research Centre)

Women's exclusion from community studies and impact assessment exercises means that a significant aspect of the human side of energy development is excluded.

We've described a way of including women by starting from women's perspectives, doing research based on interviewing women, asking women to describe their lives and work. We've seen that proceeding in this way provides a better understanding of the community. Since women live and work in communities, they have particular expertise about them. Furthermore, we've seen that women's work is more than a matter of "social buffering" or integration; it is also an economic matter. For example, women's work - domestic work - makes possible men's participation in the paid labour force.

Recognizing women's lives and work and starting from that perspective makes visible the human side of energy development in all its complexity.

It is clear from our presentation that the human side of energy development, including women's concerns about development, is not focussed exclusively on social impacts. It is a matter of economics - the costs in economic terms of energy development. But we've seen that the energy development decision-makers ignore both the economic and social impacts as we've described them. The economic factors that are important to government and industry are defined very narrowly in terms of the cost of getting the oil or gas out of the ground; the cost of transporting the oil or gas; and ultimately the cost the consumer will have to pay for the resource.

The kinds of economic and social impacts we've identified, if they are recognized at all by the decision-makers, are considered exogenous factors - they are dismissed as unimportant or perhaps uncontrollable factors.

It is important to note that energy development decision-makers have demonstrated some awareness, when it is expedient, of the importance and the role of women's work - particularly domestic work. For example, in the development of new towns, single industry towns, there are stages in the resource extraction process when an unmarried, "independent" work force is seen as preferable. Workers with families are discouraged from coming

to town in that stage of development or at least married workers must leave their families behind. At stages when a longer-term work commitment is required for resource extraction, it is expedient for male workers to bring their families - for the "stability" the families provide. Moen, et al., in Women and the Social Cost of Economic Development*, refer to the functions of social intergration and stabilization and social buffering that traditionally have been women's work. And they point out that, if the private sector were to attempt to take over the daily, life-sustaining services women's work consists of, the cost would be so high few families could afford to purchase such services. Women's work is essential work - the satisfaction of basic needs that takes place in the home is women's responsibility.

Although developers may make economic decisions based on the functions served by women's work when it is expedient to do so, that is a far cry from according that work appropriate recognition and valuation. Furthermore, the economic and social impact of energy development on women and their families is conveniently ignored by developers - both industry and government.

There are very good, logical reasons for integrating community concerns and women's concerns - those social infrastructure issues and broader economic issues which we've outlined - into energy development planning and impact assessment.

For example: The federal government could better meet its legislated responsibility to make choices regarding the desirability of specific development projects. And certainly it could better anticipate and mitigate the social and economic impacts of development.

Provincial or territorial governments would be better able to develop fiscal policy and programs based on informed predictions of the resources and needs created by the impact of development.

Local governments could increase their autonomy and control regarding impacts and be better prepared to apply for impact funds, to develop appropriate programs, and to make fiscal policy decisions, and thus, to reduce the number of immediate crises they have to deal with as a result of development.

Corporations would be better able to meet the impact assessment requirements that are sometimes a part of their applications for a specific

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*Moen, Elizabeth, et al., Women and the Social Costs of Economic Development: Two Colorado Case Studies, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1981

energy development project, and improve their image, at least, of being "good corporate citizens" - though this may be a mute point.

Unions, particularly industrial unions, would benefit from obtaining a more comprehensive picture of the social and economic impacts on specific communities where their members and their families are residents and would perhaps (as the IWA in Fort Nelson did) put pressure on the local decision-makers for improvements. Even the building trade unions could gain in terms of planning for negotiations regarding working conditions and safety, for example, if they had more information about the communities in which their members would be working - the services available, etc.

And the methodology we've outlined is an effective and inexpensive assessment approach. Certainly this methodology is preferable to the superficial approach of so-called assessment hearings Mobil Oil held in Newfoundland, or the sham of Alaska Highway Gas Pipeline Terms and Conditions hearings that were held in B.C. and the Yukon.

A re-orientation, a basic and major shift in impact assessment and energy development planning, is required to take into account the economic and social impacts we've outlined.

However, it is not easy to be optimistic about the possibility of this happening.

Current development practices are profitable. The vested interests of governments, corporations and to some extent even unions are served well by these practices. So much so that the National Energy Board proposed in 1981 to institutionalize tripartism as the modus operandi for all future energy development projects in Canada.

But tripartism excludes the community and certainly it excludes women.

If governments, corporations and unions have the energy development scene sewn up - those of us who are concerned primarily about the communities involved and the people involved are left with a series of questions.

Is it possible for unions to negotiate or at least pressure the appropriate decision-makers for adequate housing, recreation programs and facilities, childcare, health service, etc? These are issues that affect the workers unions represent.

Will the corporations undertaking energy development contribute to the development of these programs and services that are among the first to be affected negatively, stretched to the breaking point by the corporations' development initiatives?

Will industry and labour do more than pay lip-service to hiring women for non-traditional (or even traditional) jobs by developing realistic and relevant training programs with childcare provided? (Programs, that is, which are scheduled at reasonable times to accommodate women's other work responsibilities and which are accessible in towns where public transit is limited or non-existent.) Will industries and unions recognize that the high cost of living precipitated by energy development programs requires that families have two pay cheques, i.e. that women need to work?

The cost-of-living problem is a major one with a profound impact on residents of communities in the path of development.

Household and family maintenance is central to women's work. A higher cost of living makes that work more difficult. Increased costs and poor quality of the goods necessary for a family's survival and well-being are, it seems, an inevitable effect of development.

As Dixon points out in What Happened to Fairbanks*:

> To obtain cost-of-living information requires a tremendous amount of technical expertise and economic resources which are usually not available to a small community.

The federal government, through its various agencies, can make a major contribution in helping communities attain more control over the impacts of development by making available to the community information on cost of living. Provincial and territorial governments also have a role to play in the cost-of-living battle. For example: if it's possible for the Yukon government to subsidize liquor, surely it's possible to work out some subsidy scheme for food and other essential goods.

Looking at women's work of childcare and household maintenance draws attention to the availability and suitability of basic health and social services, education, and police services. Hospitals and health care services are usually inadequate in smaller northern communities at the best of times. Energy development projects bring more people to town and put an even greater strain on local services. Schools will be even more overcrowded.

There will be an increased need for support services such as marriage counselling, mental health services, detox programs, transition houses,

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*Dixon, Mim, What Happened to Fairbanks? The Effects of the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline on the Community of Fairbanks, Alaska, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1978.

rape crisis services, and on and on. Police services will be strained to focus on the apparently inevitable increase in vandalism, damage to property, and traffic violations, with the result that people's need for police protection from violence will take a back seat. Will the federal government's primary response to this range of social impacts of development continue to be increases in RCMP staff - which one official of the Northern Pipeline Agency in 1978 identified as being its only response? These social costs, this human side of energy development, must be integrated into development planning - they must cease to be seen as exogneous factors.

If impact assessment is undertaken in a more realistic way and if the results of such assessment are integrated into developers' decision-making, energy development could become a more cooperative, less combative venture, with more benefits for more people.

However, it is the communities, the people (men and particularly women) who live in the path of development who have the most to gain by the integration of social impacts into energy development planning. They also have the most to lose by their continued exclusion from the process.

And so - even if it is not naive to expect governments and the corporate sector and unions to see the light and make the required changes in impact assessment practices - the major burden and the major responsibility inevitably rests with the women and men who live in developing communities to defend themselves.

Women have a special role in this regard. They have to predict the impact of development on their town in order to make informed decisions about their own and their families' lives. By studying their own community, by gathering empirical data, interviewing the residents of the town - the real experts on community life - by examining the hows and whys of the delivery of goods and services and local decision-making, citizens will be able to make better-informed decisions. They will be able to decide more realistically whether or when to sell or buy a house; how the education system will or will not meet their children's needs; whether they should change jobs or try to get work in energy development; whether the health care system will meet their own and their children's needs; whether they will be protected from the violence that too often comes with development; whether they should expand their small business or make new investments; whether they will withstand the rise in the cost of living or have to leave town. The list goes on.

Northerners are expected to accept the romantic mystique of the north. They are told they must be tough to endure. They are told to move to southern cities if they want higher standards of service and care.

People are educated to believe they must suffer to have progress. Therefore, they try personally to cope with the impacts of economic development. They are encouraged to blame themselves if they have difficulty coping with changes in the social infrastructure due to even the most obvious external factors, such as the construction of a pipeline.

Increasingly, however, people are questioning the acceptability of the need for energy development as a justification for inadequate goods and services.

And it is unfortunately true that choices are generally rather limited for those of us who are average citizens, and especially for those of us who are women and, therefore, economically and socially dependent on men. Studying our own community and particularly recognizing the contribution and reality of women's work may very well lead beyond the kinds of decisions I've outlined. If women's choices are not as simple as deciding to "make the best" of the impact of development on their town, or leave, they will have to stay and fight for better living conditions - as women in northern resource towns have traditionally done.

The kind of community study we've outlined, which begins from women's perspective and recognizes the importance of women's work and expertise, gives a solid basis for action. Whether it's a transit system or a hospital that's needed; whether it's better recreational facilities or better social services; whether it's a transition house or a rape crisis centre or better housing that reflects the climatic conditions, or more rental accommodation; whether it's employment in non-traditional jobs and childcare, or subsidies for food and other essential goods - whatever the issue, knowledge of community structure, needs and resources will inform the action that needs to be taken.

Although there is no justice in it, the residents of resource-based communities, and especially the women residents, will be forced to act in self-defence to protect themselves and their families until some day governments and corporations will accept their responsibilities as well as their profits and integrate the human side of energy development into planning.